

Dr. Burgess Weekly Address February 7, 2018

Update on the Memo

Hello, this is your Congressman Michael Burgess.

Over the last few weeks, I have heard from many of you about the classified memos relating to the government's surveillance capabilities. Since my last update on this topic, there have been some significant changes. Today I would like to use this to share further information.

Both classified memos – written by House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence Majority and Minority staff, respectively – were available to Members of Congress. As part of my congressional responsibilities, I read both the Republican and Democrat memos. The Republican memo has been declassified; however, I cannot discuss the content of the Democrats' memo unless it is also declassified.

Since the Majority memo first became available to Members, I have believed that it should be released more broadly to the public – as long as appropriate declassification procedures were followed. Last Friday, this previously-classified memo was indeed made available to the public in accordance with House and Committee rules, including review by the Executive Branch and more than 200 Members of the House.

With the recent attention on the release process, the facts can become lost in the mechanics. However, here is what we do know from this document: The Steele dossier was the essential factor in obtaining a FISA warrant targeting an American citizen - Carter Page. Former FBI Deputy Director McCabe stated that no surveillance warrant would have been sought from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court without the Steele dossier information.

Here's the bottom line: This dossier was paid for by a political opponent, and used 18 days before an election to obtain a FISA warrant to spy on a United States citizen. The government's surveillance powers are potentially vast, and must be circumscribed carefully to protect Americans' civil liberties. Any use of these

powers for political purposes or any purpose other than defending the American people simply must not be allowed.

We must take this information seriously, as well as any abuse of our government's surveillance powers. The American people should have access to this information. In the coming days, we will learn more about the potential release of the Democrats' memo. I look forward to continuing to update you as more information is made available.

As always, if you have questions about this issue or any other issue, please contact my office at Burgess.house.gov. In the meantime, may God bless our country, God our troops, Good bless the men and women who work in the intelligence community, and as the song says, God bless you Texas.